ECHOES FROM BENGAL

(*By* **Orpheus**)

Bengal is in pictures again. It is a bad picture. The settled things are unsettled out of personal pique and not of public policy. Self-seeking politics are bad and deserve nothing but condemnation. But, unfortunately, it is personal factors which dominate present-day politics rather than matters of public policy and concern. This is the most sickening feature of Indian politics.

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The Bengal Cabinet has resigned under dramatic circumstances. At the moment of writing, it is difficult to foresee the "shape of things to come." The crisis was in the air for days. It has now come to a head. The circumstances leading to the crisis are recent history. The barge of Bengal Cabinet has been in troubled waters for days past. The currents and cross-currents have tossed it dangerously. The dangers were aggravated by the personal factors, and the Pilot's shifting courses.

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The Assembly met and adjourned, ostensibly for devising ways and means for the smooth passage of the Secondary Education Bill. But the Bill now stands buried seven fathoms deep. Muslim Bengal was crying hoarse over the Bill. It is buried for the time being. The day of reckoning for those responsible for the burial will dawn one day—even earlier than the self-seekers think.

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The Leaguers are naturally upset. But why worry? it is better that the chaff should be blown from the corn. The luke-worm are more a drag than help to a big organization. The base coins cannot be current for all time. Their detection is inevitable. The temporary set-back need not be a damper. The trials have their value and utility. Face them boldly, and with faith and courage. A big organization like the League cannot have smooth sailing right through.

The League stands for justice, truth and fair-play. Its cause cannot be killed. The League has survived tribulations in the past. It is now in a much better position. These tactics by the luke-worm cannot wreck its course. These may impede, but will not obstruct, its onward march. The difficulties will wear off. These will make the League stronger and healthier. Fire not only consumes but purifies the gold too. The gloss may dazzle for a while, but cannot stand the wear and tear of time.

The "chord of Allah" is there. Hold it straight and true. Even the Prophet had to fight against tremendous odds. The *Munafiqs* created endless obstacles. But they ultimately faded out. Have faith and fight the forces down. Hypocracy cannot stand the glamour of truth. Public memory may be proverbially short, but common sense is not so transient. The man in the street is shrewd enough to sort out the base from the genuine coins.

STUDENTS AND POLITICS

By **Shakir Husain Khan, B.A.** *(Alig.)*

The Views expressed in this article are not necessarily those of The Dawn.

THE question of student's participation in politics has been a subject of controversy for some years past in India. It is well-known how sedulous attempts were made to wean away students from the educational institutions to reinforce the abortive movements of direct action launched in 1920 and again in 1930 and 1932.

But one thing is remarkable in this connection. Care is always taken that no Hindu national institution suffers in any way. In 1920 a conserted attack was launched against the Muslim University of Aligarh, while Benares was left untouched. Aligarh was all but annihilated. Its escape was miraculous. In 1930 and 1932 again Benares was specifically excluded from the picketing operations which had brought the work of other institutions to a standstill. It is therefore obvious that no uniform principle or policy has been followed with regard to students and their association with politics.

Not very long ago it was freely preached among Muslim students, also in Aligarh, by the pseudo-Nationalists that politics was a very desirable thing and they must play their full part in the so-called National movement. It was considered to be all right as long as the Muslim students were willing to be camp-followers of the congress Caucus and to serve as convenient tools of their party propaganda, but when they turn to their own national organisation, the Muslim League, and show interest in their own national politics, the cry is at once raised that students should really keep aloof from politics and their sole aim should be to do well at studies.

Recently some of the foremost Congress Leaders like Mr. Rajagopal Acharya and Mr. Satyamurti have been going about counselling the general body of students to keep away from active politics. These fluctuations in the opinions of the so-called nationalist leaders with regard to students can only be explained with reference to the ups and downs in the fortunes of their party and the extent to which they can make use of the student body.

One common mistake made by people in discussing the students' role in politics is that they look at the matter without reference to the peculiar conditions in India. In independent countries which possess full sovereign powers, like England or America, conditions of political life are normal. The main concern of students is their studies and their interest in politics is only academic. There is usually no serious internal crisis to distract their attention from their studies.

But the conditions in a politically dependent country like India are totally different. The situation has two main features, Firstly, the one consideration which

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